Saskatchewan
Education

Aboriginal Elders and Community Workers in Schools

A Guide for School Divisions and Their Partners

Community Education
Saskatchewan Education
March 2001

ISBN 1-894116-58-5

101-06641/

Acknowledgements

This document is a compilation of beliefs, ideas and experiences of school division personnel throughout the province. The guide would not have been possible without the support of Elders, Aboriginal education consultants, outreach workers, liaisons and advisors, Community School coordinators, principals, superintendents and directors.

Saskatchewan Education is grateful to the following organizations and people who contributed to this guide:

Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee (AEPAC)

Biggar School Division
Bob Clipperton
Morris Smith

Ile a la Crosse School Division
Dave Dornstauder
Dr. Bill Duffee

Maple Creek School Division
Ed Bath

Meadow Lake School Division
Pat Gervais
Glen Winkler

Moose Jaw School Division
Betty McKenna
Gordon Paice

Nipawin School Division
Kathy Palidwar
James Sekulich

Northern Lights School Division
Marion Cocarell
Greg Hatch
Stephen King

North West Separate School Division
Herb Sutton

Prince Albert Separate School Division
Darrell Greyeyes
Gerry Guillet

Regina Separate School Division
Bob Kowalchuck

Regina Public School Division
Mary Rose Boyer
Maureen Johns Simpson
Audrey Roadhouse

St. Paul's Separate School Division
Bev Hanson
Gordon Martell
Kevin McLean

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division
Ron Bentley
Linda Greyeyes
Tom Sutherland

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation
Rita Bouvier

Saskatoon Public School Division
Susan Agecoutney
Ted Amendt
Toni Carlson
Roland Duquette
Pamela Goulden-McLeod
Monica Goulet
David Katzman
Cole Kirby
Maureen Strawson

We are very grateful to the Elders who have assisted in preparing this guide – Darrell Greyeyes, Elder with the Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division; Betty McKenna, Elder, Prince Arthur School, Moose Jaw; and Roland Duquette, Elder, Saskatoon.

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Introduction

The success of Aboriginal students in school and in life is a priority for Saskatchewan Education and other stakeholders in the provincial education system.

Aboriginal organizations, parents and educators, as well as the literature, point out that increasing Aboriginal students' cultural knowledge and pride in their heritage will improve self-esteem. Students with positive self-esteem have a far better opportunity to reach their potential academically, personally and socially.

The inclusion of Elders, community workers and other Aboriginal resource people in the school program has been identified by a number of school divisions and the Aboriginal community as an important support for students. Combined with other services, initiatives involving Elders and community workers can strengthen student success.

Purpose

This guide has been produced to assist boards of education to develop policy and guidelines if they choose to initiate programs involving Elders, Aboriginal community workers or other resource people. It will also assist school division administrators and their community partners to design and implement local initiatives in schools.

The majority of the information and suggestions contained in the guide have been obtained from school divisions with existing programs. These initiatives are highlighted throughout the guide. More detailed descriptions of programs, including contacts, are outlined in Appendix C.

Demographic Factors

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (1997) predicts that by 2016, close to one-half of the children in Saskatchewan will be of Aboriginal descent. A significant number of these children will be attending provincial schools.

"Strong cultural values, First Nations identity in students, and mainstream academic and technical education are not incompatible or contradictory, but in fact the former enhances one's capacity to deal with and master the latter. With a solid grounding in one's own culture and positive identity, students become much higher achievers in all areas of education and life."

- Assembly of First Nations, 1988

Aboriginal Elder/Outreach Program

In response to needs identified by school divisions, Saskatchewan Education introduced the Aboriginal Elder/Outreach Program in 1999. It is a special component of the Indian and Métis Education Development (IMED) Program. The IMED program, which was introduced in 1984, assists school divisions to provide supports for Aboriginal students.

This special IMED funding for Aboriginal Elder/outreach initiatives helps school divisions bring Aboriginal resource people, such as Elders, community/outreach workers or cultural advisors, into schools. The program encourages the building and enhancement of relationships between school divisions and the Aboriginal community.

Aboriginal Elders, community workers, cultural advisors, and other Aboriginal resource people play a vital role in creating a culturally-affirming school environment (one that responds to and reflects the traditions, values and experiences of students). These resource people can link students, staff, families and community to Aboriginal cultures and traditions. They can also bring an enhanced Aboriginal perspective to the school.

In addition, Aboriginal resource people provide an opportunity for all students, staff, families and community members to learn about and value diversity within the community.

Benefits of Involving Aboriginal Elders and Other Resource People in the School

The over-arching benefit of involving Aboriginal Elders, community workers, cultural advisors and other resource people in the school is that Aboriginal students see themselves and their cultural heritage reflected and respected within the school. This helps students develop positive self-esteem, which in turn helps them achieve their potential in school and in life.

Other related benefits include:

Enhancing Cultural Perspective
Aboriginal resource people help staff, students and the community better understand Aboriginal perspectives. They help classroom teachers incorporate Aboriginal content within the curriculum, enable staff to better understand issues from the viewpoint of Aboriginal peoples and help schools respond to student and community needs.

Building Relationships with the Aboriginal Community
Aboriginal resource people enhance communication and relationships between the school and the Aboriginal community. They help Aboriginal parents and community members feel welcome in the school. They also assist schools and school divisions to build upon their relationships with Aboriginal governing bodies and community organizations.

Promoting Awareness of Culture and Traditions
The most often cited benefit is the increased awareness and understanding of the traditions, languages, values and spirituality within the First Nations and Métis cultures. This benefits Aboriginal students and their families by bringing them closer to their heritage. It also benefits non-Aboriginal students, teachers, staff and administrators by helping them to further understand and appreciate Aboriginal perspectives and traditions. This offers opportunities for all to celebrate past and present contributions of Aboriginal peoples, preserving a part of Saskatchewan's rich history.

Benefits for the Non-Aboriginal Community

"Aboriginal Elder and community outreach programs are not just for Aboriginal students. All our students benefit from our Elder. Students begin to develop an understanding of the Aboriginal culture. They learn about the spiritual dimension. This is of immense importance in our fight against racism.

Our Elder provides a very valuable service to all students in our school system. He is instrumental in our attempts to provide a bridging between native spirituality and Catholic faith, which is our foundation."

– Gerry Guillet, former Assistant Director, Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

A Sense of Belonging

"Aboriginal Elders and community/outreach workers can be tremendous human catalysts in the pursuit of culturally relevant and dynamic programs which are created in concert with the communities they serve. They can provide a voice that will enable schools to become more aware and responsive.

Elders and community/outreach workers can also facilitate meaningful community involvement in the school. When participation grows, communities develop a sense of belonging, which results in higher self-esteem, higher academic achievement, and a lower transiency rate."

– Monica Goulet, former Indian and Métis Education Consultant, Saskatoon Public School Division

Addressing Social and Cultural Issues

Aboriginal resource people can work directly with students and their families to address social and cultural issues that impact upon their lives and their opportunity to learn. In collaboration with other staff and community agencies the resource person can assist students and their families identify personal and family issues, and develop plans to address these issues. Through close contact with the families, the resource people can also identify community and societal issues that influence the success of students.

Providing a Mentor/Role Model

Elders and community workers provide a positive role model for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, as well as school staff and community members. He or she can serve as an ambassador for those who strive to promote and value diversity.

Promoting Harmony

Aboriginal resource people can help schools address stereotypes, discrimination and racism. They provide positive role models and help all students and staff better understand Aboriginal perspectives and cultures.

Focus on Aboriginal Identity

In 1997-98, the Indian and Métis Education Advisory Committee, now called the Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee (AEPAC), recommended that Saskatchewan Education give priority to materials and programs to support Aboriginal identity because:

- a focus on Aboriginal identity embodies caring and concern for the individual student;
- programs dealing with identity, through the involvement of Elders and the community, address diversity within the Aboriginal community and encourage parental and community involvement; and,
- initiatives dealing with Aboriginal identity imply a positive approach to education reform.

Understanding the Traditional Role of an Aboriginal Elder

Identifying an Elder

"Who is an Elder?" is one of the first questions to arise when a school division begins to discuss bringing Aboriginal Elders into the school. As the following explanation from the Prince Albert Catholic Separate School Division outlines, a person becomes an Elder in the eyes of his or her community by developing knowledge of life and traditional ways. It is also important to appreciate the spiritual significance within traditional Aboriginal culture of the Creator granting the power to fulfil the role of the Elder.

"It is more than just the community that defines an Elder, it is the will of the Creator recognized through guidance received in prayer."

– Gordon Martell, Indian and Métis Coordinator, St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division, Saskatoon

Who is an Elder?

Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

It is impossible, and perhaps even disrespectful, to try to define Elders in the precise empirical terms commonly used by our larger European-based society. However, there are some generally agreed upon criteria that are accepted. They include:

- the Elder is recognized and respected by his/her own family and community for such attributes as having knowledge that is accompanied by wisdom, kindness and appropriate moral behaviour;
- an Elder has earned his/her knowledge through years of struggle and sacrifice and his/her authority comes from the spirit;
- an Elder has patience, caution, humility and kindness;
- an Elder usually is a person who is fulfilling the role of a grandparent;
- an Elder is usually fluent in his/her first language;
- an Elder never asks for monetary payment for services rendered; and,
- Elders are seen to have very special and unique gifts and abilities.

Elders are certainly not all the same. Aside from the obvious difference that arise from the fact that each Aboriginal nation and community may have unique aspects of Eldership, it must be kept in mind that each Elder is a "specialist" in one or more areas (e.g., traditional sacred ceremonies, legends, spiritual well-being, healing process, oral history, etc.).

The identification of Elders is a very sensitive and complex issue. Strategies to determine who the Elders are in a community must be chosen with delicacy to ensure only those people recognized and respected by his/her own family and community are called upon. This will minimize the risk of offence and error. It is advisable for "the novice" to seek the assistance of a knowledgeable intermediary in order to approach and invite the services of an Elder.

"A true Elder does not judge. A true Elder will bring out the best in themselves to others, be it in the craft they are helping to make or the heart they are helping to heal."

– Linda Greyeyes, Aboriginal Education Consultant, Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

"The knowledge and special gifts our Elders share with all must be respected."

– Linda Greyeyes, Aboriginal Education Consultant, Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

Specialization

Traditionally, Elders specialized in one or more areas. These areas of specialization can include:

- herbalists;
- healers;
- storytellers;
- practitioners of traditional and sacred ceremonies and activities; and,
- advisors – political, historical, spiritual and/or cultural.

It is important that schools recognize that Elders specialize. One Elder may not be able to meet all needs within a school. For example, an Elder who specializes in advising youth and families may not be able to conduct specific spiritual ceremonies. Before approaching an Elder schools should know what they want the Elder to do and what services the individual Elder is able to provide.

School personnel are encouraged to seek guidance from local tribal councils, First Nation councils, Métis locals and other Aboriginal organizations. Most have lists of respected Elders and their specializations, and can provide assistance to make appropriate choices, respecting the individual and varied gifts of each elder, and to understand the protocols used within the community.

Protocol

There are specific expectations and protocols involved with approaching, greeting or making a request of an Elder. These vary from community to community. Many include presenting the Elder with a gift in appreciation of the visit and knowledge shared. Most protocols involve presenting the Elder with tobacco (usually a package of pipe tobacco). Tobacco is spiritually significant in most First Nation cultures. Elders use the tobacco as an offering in seeking guidance from the spirit world.

Protocols used in the southern part of the province may not apply in the North. Northern traditions, ceremonies and protocols are closely associated with life on the trapline, hunting and outdoor skills.

Several examples of guidelines/protocols adopted by school divisions are provided in Appendix A.

"Tobacco is sacred, and as an offering, it has many meanings.

- *The act of giving tobacco is important. When you give an Elder tobacco you are saying, "I respect your wisdom and knowledge, I welcome you, I want you to provide a service or information.*
- *The tobacco is also important spiritually. The Elder will use the tobacco that has been given to him or her to ask the Creator for guidance. The Elder will burn the tobacco or place it on the ground in offering. In this way, you are receiving the knowledge of the Elder plus help from the spirit."*

– Darrell Greyeyes, Elder, Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Traditional Aboriginal Ceremonies and Activities

When Aboriginal culture becomes a focus in your school, students, staff and families may begin learning about traditional Aboriginal ceremonies and activities. Many of these ceremonies and activities are spiritually based. This section provides an overview of some of these traditions.

There is great diversity within the Aboriginal community and different people/nations express their spirituality in different ways. Some students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and their families will not want to participate in traditional spiritual ceremonies. It is important to respect the wishes of individuals and families.

Boards of education, local boards of trustees and administrators may wish to discuss the spiritual nature of some traditional activities prior to implementation. More information on spirituality in schools can be found in the *Suggestions for Planning and Implementation* section on page 19.

Oral Tradition

For centuries, Elders have used the oral tradition to hand down cultural values, traditions and histories. The spoken word, and listening, means a great deal in Aboriginal cultures. Spiritual ceremonies and traditions can only be passed on verbally by Elders. It is important that these traditions be respected within school divisions.

Circles

Aboriginal Elders often use circles. In a circle every person is considered equal. Elders will use talking or sharing circles to listen to participants. Circles are also used for telling stories and legends and for counselling. In most cases, an Elder will prefer talking in smaller groups.

Storytelling

Many Elders are skilled storytellers. In classrooms, Elders often use storytelling to teach children about cultural traditions, values, proper conduct and history. The Elders' stories do not directly tell children how to act. Rather, children must listen carefully and use their imagination and experience

Sharing Circles

"Kids in the circle are free to talk openly and frankly about anything they wish with the Elders, from problems at home to games they've played. The circle is a kind of release for their feelings. The children teach the Elder to be strong of character - you see a child with problems at home, yet they've found the courage to come to school, even sometimes with a smile."

– Roland Duquette, Elder, Saskatoon

to determine the values related in the story. Oral storytelling helps all children to engage in learning and develop language arts skills.

Storytelling

"Storytelling is one of the traditional ways to teach our children lessons about life. These stories were open-ended to allow children to interpret their own truths and arrive at their own conclusions. Usually a number of truths (possibilities) would be presented to indicate that one way was not the only way. Children learned to be patient and to be good listeners because some of the stories were long, depending on the lesson to be learned. It was customary to present a gift to the storyteller for his / her words of wisdom. This also reinforced the teaching that one does not take without giving something in return."

– Kise Wa To Ta To Win Aboriginal Parent Program Inc., Saskatoon, 1995

Respect for Sacred Ceremonies and Objects

"All individuals associated in working with Elders need to have a profound respect for First Nations teachings and traditions. Cultural sensitivity and awareness needs to extend beyond the human relationship.

For example, a ceremonial drum was left unattended by an Elder at a school for a short period of time. A person in attendance proceeded to play the drum to the astonishment of the Elder and Indian-Metis Consultant. The individual who "played" with the drum did not have a full appreciation or understanding of the sacred nature of the drum in the First Nations spiritual life. A spiritual ceremony was held to restore the sacred nature of the drum."

– Bob Kowalchuk, Superintendent of Education, Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Ceremonies

Elders have passed down ceremonies and traditional beliefs for centuries. For your school's Elder program to be successful, it is necessary that all involved show respect for the Elder, the ceremonies, and the sacred objects associated with the ceremonies.

Caution must be taken in describing spiritual ceremonies. Only Elders acknowledged by their community may explain, conduct and interpret these sacred ceremonies and rituals – these traditions can not be written about or recorded by audio or visual methods.

General descriptions of three of the more common ceremonies are provided below. Not all ceremonies will be appropriate in all schools. After discussing the various ceremonies with Elders and your community partners, you may decide not to offer ceremonies at the school. If traditional ceremonies are to be part of the school program, you may wish to discuss the following topics before asking students to participate:

- parental consent;
- orientation to participants;
- health concerns; and,
- location of the ceremony.

Smudging
Smudging, or cleansing, is required in most traditional ceremonies. It involves burning a sacred or medicinal plant. Participants wave the smoke over themselves to cleanse their bodies and minds. The Elder will often explain why smudging is important and, if appropriate, may explain what medicines (plants) are being used and why.

Pipe Ceremonies
The pipe is sacred in First Nations cultures. If appropriate, an Elder may conduct a pipe ceremony in a school. The Elder will explain the proper respect and protocol involved in using and handling the pipe, why the pipe is significant, when it can be used and who can use it.

Sweatlodge Ceremonies
Many First Nation Elders will be comfortable conducting a sweatlodge ceremony. The Elder will explain the meaning and purpose of the sweatlodge and the proper protocol involved in participating in the ceremony.

Role of an Elder in a School

The role of an Elder in a school will vary depending upon the needs of the school and the specialization of the Elder. It will be important to invite (through appropriate protocols) the input of the Elder(s) prior to beginning a program to ensure that the agreed upon role meets the needs of the school and respects the traditional role of the Elder within his or her community.

Some examples of the most common roles of Elders in Saskatchewan schools are listed below. Within traditional Aboriginal cultures, the role of an Elder has been handed down over the centuries through tradition and spiritual guidance. Elders may be unaccustomed to seeing their role formally described in writing. Some may see a formally written role as limiting compared to their more holistic role within the community. Again, it will be important to discuss any concerns with the Elder before implementing the program.

Pleasant Hill Community School

"The primary goal of a Community School is to make the school and the community 'one'. The Elder has a critical role to play in enabling this. The Elder provides a vital social and cultural link between the school and the community. In addition, Elders often act as a liaison between families and various Aboriginal and government agencies. In short, Elders can act as outreach workers in adapting to the community."

– Cole Kirby,
former Principal,
Pleasant Hill
Community School,
Saskatoon

Promoting Cultural Awareness and Understanding

The most common role for Elders in Saskatchewan schools is as a transmitter of cultural knowledge. Elders often visit classrooms to explain traditions. They may conduct specific ceremonies, if they are practitioners. Through everyday contact they help students and staff understand traditional ways and values. In northern Saskatchewan, Elders are involved in cultural camps and other initiatives that help students learn about traditional lifestyles and outdoor survival skills.

Linking the Aboriginal Community and School

Schools report that Elders have played an important role in enhancing communications between the school and the Aboriginal community. Elders may conduct home visits, set aside specific times at the school for community people to visit or seek advice or participate in organizing community events at the school. These activities all help Aboriginal parents and other community members feel more comfortable in the school and, as a result, relationships are more positive. Elders also have enhanced relationships between Aboriginal governing bodies and community organizations and schools.

Promoting Aboriginal Language Acquisition and Retention

Elders can play a critical role in promoting Aboriginal languages. Through interaction with Elders, students can enhance their vocabulary development and link language acquisition with culture traditions and heritage.

Guiding and Counselling Students, Families and School Staff

In some schools, the Elder provides guidance to students and their families. This can take the form of individual counselling at the request of the student, teacher or administrator. It is also common for an Elder to provide guidance to groups through storytelling in classrooms or participating in talking circles. In addition, Elders are invaluable to school staff by providing cultural perspective and advice on interactions with students and families.

"If you don't tell your children who and what they are, they won't know. How can they be proud of what they don't know."

– Salish Elder, 1980
(quoted in Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit, 1996)

Schools are advised to exercise caution when requesting Elders to provide individual counselling. Only Elders who specialize in advising and counselling should be asked to undertake this role. When helping high-risk students, it will be important that Elders work closely with other school counsellors, special education personnel and community agencies such as Social Services and health districts.

Assisting Teachers with the Adaptive Dimension

Elders, when requested, have assisted teachers in adapting the curriculum to include Aboriginal content and perspectives. Elders often act as resource people in the classroom by explaining traditions and ceremonies. Some schools report the Elders have also supported teachers in reviewing resources for use in the classroom.

The Elder as a Role Model

Elders, for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, should demonstrate the ability to listen and understand.

Elders are non-judgmental and what is told to an Elder stays with the Elder.

Elders demonstrate respect for Mother Earth and for others by their practices.

Elders have a duty to pass on the knowledge of their ancestors to the people.

Elders tell their ancestors' stories. They encourage all children to initiate dialogue with their parents about their ancestors. This helps children understand who they are and where they come from.

Elders conduct themselves in a humble manner (we do not brag or boast of our accomplishments).

Elders live life in a good way (we do not do things that would negatively influence others such as drinking alcohol or being physically and/or verbally abusive).

Elders value the "bestowed gifts" from creators. Laughter, songs and celebrations are part of our relations with others.

An Elder views all children as their own little bits of happiness to be enjoyed. An Elder will always feel grateful to have been a part of a child's life no matter how brief.

Elders also do their best to honour and support each other and to remove stereotyping (you are not Indian until you wear Indian clothes).

– Betty McKenna, Elder/Facilitator,
Prince Arthur School, Moose Jaw

Role of an Aboriginal Community Worker in a School

An Aboriginal community worker is a liaison between Aboriginal families and the school. Titles of people working in these positions can include outreach workers, home-school liaisons or family liaisons. The specific role of the community worker and the activities in which he or she is involved depend upon the school and the community, and upon the individual's skills and interests. Some of the more common roles of Aboriginal community workers in schools are described below.

"The most rewarding part of my job as an outreach worker was getting to know the families and helping them solve a problem or get support from other agencies. I believe that an outreach worker should be a strong advocate on behalf of families and students, be able to work with community groups and be able to assess and address a variety of complex problems."

– Pamela Goulden-McLeod, School Social Worker, Saskatoon Public School Division, (former outreach worker)

Building Relationships Between the Aboriginal Community and the School

An Aboriginal community worker who knows the community and is respected in the community can help the school enhance its relationship with Aboriginal families. This can be accomplished by conducting home visits, coordinating meetings between staff and families, and organizing school/community cultural activities such as pow-wows, traditional ceremonies and feasts that involve families.

Encouraging Family Involvement in Their Children's Education

Aboriginal community workers can have a positive effect on how Aboriginal students and their families view the school and education. By working closely with families and the school, the community worker can encourage parents and extended family members to become more involved in their child's education, both in school and at home.

Working with Families to Help Students Stay in School

In some schools, one of the community worker's primary roles is helping students stay in school. The community worker, having built a relationship with the family and the school, can help the student, family and school come to an agreement on an individual program that is meaningful to the student. This often includes the involvement of other human service agencies in providing supports for the student and family.

Promoting Cultural Awareness and Understanding

In a majority of schools, the community worker has extensive knowledge of the local community and Aboriginal cultures. He or she is able to promote cultural awareness and understanding

among students and staff. The community worker may coordinate the visits of Elders and other Aboriginal resource people. The community worker may also coordinate ongoing activities such as dance groups or cultural clubs.

Counselling

In a number of schools, the community worker provides individual counselling to students. Depending on the skills and training of the individual, this may include informal listening and advising, or more formal personal counselling/guidance. One school division advises that it is crucial to take counselling issues such as qualifications and confidentiality into consideration at the outset of the program.

Linking Students and Families to Other Services

Some students and families face complex problems that cannot be addressed by the school alone. These problems often have a profound effect on the student's educational success. Community workers can link families to other community agencies and services. To ensure continuity and communication, the community worker and the school will need to establish collaborative relationships with human service agencies in the community.

Advocacy

The community worker may advocate on behalf of students or families. This may involve issues such as housing, access to services or conflict with the justice, social services or education system. To avoid misunderstandings, discussions about advocacy and the role of the community worker should take place at the developmental stages of the program. It will be important to include school staff and other human service personnel in the discussion.

Mediation

Depending on training and individual skills, the community worker may be called upon to mediate in a variety of situations. This may entail a disagreement between a family and the school. The community worker, having developed the trust of the family and school personnel, can help resolve conflicts. In one school division, the school community worker was an employee of the community association – this made it easier for the community worker to develop trust among some families.

Role of Other Aboriginal Resource People in a School

A school or school division, in consultation with the Aboriginal community, may decide that a resource person other than an Elder or community worker is most appropriate to address needs. The role and activities of the resource person may be similar to those described in the preceding pages for Elders and community workers. Conversely, their role may vary significantly, depending upon the school and the community.

A few examples of the role of Aboriginal resource people in schools are described below.

Aboriginal Counsellor – Biggar School Division
At the Cando School, the role of the Aboriginal Counsellor includes:

- counselling individuals and groups;
- encouraging parent and community involvement; and,
- providing conflict resolution and mediation.

Cultural Advisor – Saskatchewan Rivers School Division
In Prince Albert, the role of a Cultural Advisor includes:

- focusing on history, life style and crafts;
- explaining how crafts help children develop persistence, perfection, patience and pride;
- arranging for appropriate Elders and resource people to visit schools, families and community; and,
- providing guidance and counselling to students.

See Appendix B for the complete job description.

Grandmother's Program – Meadow Lake School Division
In Meadow Lake, the role of the school Grandmothers includes:

- meeting the day to day needs of students;
- coordinating a "welcome wagon" program for the school;
- conducting home visits regarding attendance;
- counselling/advising students;
- phoning homes regarding attendance;
- encouraging parents to become involved;
- finding volunteers for school activities; and,
- monitoring nutrition programs.

Qualifications of a Cultural Advisor

Qualifications of the Cultural Advisor for the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division include:

- knowledge of the community;
- knowledge of proper protocols and how to approach an Elder, especially with Elders from different nations and bands;
- knowledge and skills in how to approach a family; and,
- knowledge and skills with various traditional crafts.

Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor – Nipawin School Division

At L. P. Miller High School in Nipawin, the role of the Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor includes:

- counselling high school students;
- welcoming and orienting new students;
- initiating and/or participating in interagency collaboration (e.g., Youth Centre);
- coordinating multi-group response to student needs;
- coordinating student leadership activities; and,
- coordinating Métis and First Nation dance groups.

Supports in Nipawin

In Nipawin, the school division has two positions providing support to Aboriginal students. At Wagner Elementary School, Barb Morin, an Outreach Worker, helps students and families become more involved in school. She conducts home visits and provides personal counselling to students.

At L. P. Miller Composite High School, Kathy Palidwar is the Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor. As well as teaching Native Studies, Kathy's primary duties at the school include counselling and helping students develop pride in their cultural heritage. Kathy describes a current activity she has developed to help Métis students, "I also help students develop leadership skills. This year I coordinated the 'Métis Role Model Program'. It involves both cultural dance and literacy. Métis and First Nations student dancers perform for a student body, then read culturally approriate books to early elementary students. Posters have also been developed and are given as a gift. The students are then role modeling for youth. The high school students develop self-esteem and skills in leadership and literacy. The elementary students gain role models."

Another important role includes collaboration with community organizations. "This is time consuming, but essential," Kathy explains. She, along with students from the school, work closely with the health district, Social Services, the RCMP and local Aboriginal organizations to develop services and programs for youth, such as a youth centre.

Suggestions for Planning and Implementation

A majority of school divisions with existing programs emphasize the importance of the planning process. The following suggestions reflect the advice received from these divisions.

Involve Aboriginal People and Organizations
The first step in the planning process is involving local Aboriginal people and organizations in identifying needs and solutions. This can include family members, students, staff, community members and representatives from tribal councils, First Nations, Métis organizations or Friendship Centres.

"I would like to invite First Nation and Métis Elders into the school. We have to ensure we have the proper space for them first. They need their own room where they can meet with students. We would also need to have someone to welcome them and accompany them while they are here. They must feel welcome."

– Kathy Palidwar, Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor, L. P. Miller High School, Nipawin

Establish a Planning Team
If it is determined that an Elder, community worker or other Aboriginal resource person will meet student needs, the school division, along with its partners, may wish to establish a planning team. The planning team can then carry out the details of establishing the program.

School divisions with existing programs advise that for the program to be successful, the Elder, community worker or other resource person must be respected by the Aboriginal community. Knowing the perspectives and views of the community is essential. With this in mind, it will be important for local Aboriginal people to be included on the planning team.

Clarify Outcomes
To avoid misunderstandings and to aid in evaluation, the planning team may wish to discuss and agree on desired program outcomes. Some school divisions have developed a working agreement to assist in creating a common understanding of the intended outcomes.

Outcomes are the broader impacts of a program or process. They often refer to a participant's (in this case, students, families and school staff) behaviour, skills, knowledge, attitude or conditions that have changed as a result of the program.

Outcomes may include:

- increased self-esteem and pride in cultural identity among Aboriginal students;

- increased involvement of Aboriginal families in their child's education at home and in the school;
- increased appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal beliefs and culture by non-Aboriginal students and the community;
- fewer issues of racism and discrimination; or,
- increased Aboriginal student academic achievement in school.

Identify Roles and Responsibilities

Clarifying roles and responsibilities early in the development of the program will help prevent misunderstandings and confusion.

It will be critical that the role of the Elder, community worker or other resource person is clearly identified and everyone involved understands that role. Some examples of roles are provided on pages 10 to 16. As well, program summaries that include descriptions of roles can be found in Appendix C.

It is suggested that participants discuss and agree on the roles and responsibilities of the other stakeholders, including:

- board of education;
- Aboriginal groups;
- other partners;
- director of education;
- principal;
- coordinator/supervisor;
- teachers;
- other school staff;
- students; and,
- families.

Discuss Issues Specific to Elder Programs

If you are considering an Elders initiative, it may be useful to discuss the following areas prior to implementing a program.

"School divisions may wish to discuss how to respect and honour seniors and Elders from all cultural backgrounds that come to the school."

– Mary Rose Boyer, Aboriginal Education Consultant, Regina School Division

1. Respect for All Seniors and Elders

Elders within the Aboriginal community are highly respected for their knowledge of spirituality and traditions. In schools, Aboriginal Elders are treated with respect. For example, Elders are greeted when they arrive at the school and they have places of honour at school events and ceremonies. Most schools also have other seniors assisting in classrooms and other areas of the school. You may wish to discuss adopting a general protocol for all seniors with the

understanding that there are additional traditional protocols appropriate to Aboriginal Elders.

2. Spirituality in Schools

The traditional Aboriginal outlook/approach to life is based on a holistic view of human growth and well-being that recognizes the interconnectedness of spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. All of these elements need to be in balance in order for the individual to be whole.

This interconnectedness is also reflected in the goals of the Saskatchewan education system with spiritual development as one of the nine goals. The respect for family, religion and culture in a pluralistic society is included in the goal.

The Education Act, 1995 gives boards of education, and local boards of trustees in most rural school divisions, the authority to establish local policy regarding religious instruction. In most situations, Aboriginal spiritual ceremonies and activities are presented to students and their families as information about customs and beliefs, and are not intended to impose a specific religious belief on participants. These presentations provide an opportunity for students and staff to gain a better understanding of Aboriginal history and traditional values.

The roles of Elders in schools vary. Traditional spiritual ceremonies are often only one aspect of a program. Depending upon the community, including spiritual ceremonies as part of an Elder program may be controversial with some parents and students. Boards of education and local boards of trustees are advised to fully discuss the spiritual aspect of Elder programs prior to implementation.

As well, to avoid misunderstandings within the community, you may wish to include a discussion of any specific spiritual components of the program as part of the orientation to staff, students and community. More information on orientation can be found on page 21.

3. Offering Tobacco to an Elder

Tobacco is sacred and used by Aboriginal Elders as an offering to seek guidance from the Creator. Whether the Elder works full-time for the school division or visits classrooms occasionally, giving an Elder tobacco when

Tobacco in Schools

The offering of tobacco in a school setting has caused confusion in some situations. Many schools do not want children handling tobacco but understand tobacco's importance as an offering and as part of the protocol in approaching an Elder.

If you are asking a community Elder for a one-time visit to a classroom, the classroom teacher or other school official can meet with the Elder a few weeks ahead of time. The tobacco can be offered at this time.

Mrs. Betty McKenna, Elder/Facilitator at Prince Arthur School in Moose Jaw, suggests two approaches for school divisions who have full-time Elders or Elders who frequently visit schools:

"A school division official could approach the Elder with an offering of tobacco and ask the Elder to help all students throughout the year. Another way is to have the principal or vice-principal keep some tobacco in the office to give to the Elder when a student wants the help of the Elder.

I will do my best to help anyone who asks me for assistance but I do not have balance if I do not have the tobacco to offer to the Creator."

School officials should discuss any concerns about the offering of tobacco with Elders and/or local Aboriginal organizations.

asking for advice is an important protocol. Within a school setting, the offering of tobacco can be a challenge. Any concerns about tobacco and how it will be presented should be discussed with the Elder prior to implementing a program

4. Hiring/Selection Process

A majority of the school divisions with community or outreach programs used the advertisement and interview method for hiring. When selecting an Elder, however, most school divisions emphasized traditions, local customs and community wishes. Local Aboriginal groups will be able to assist in exploring the selection process.

A variety of selection/hiring processes that meet individual community needs have been used across the province. For example, in Maple Creek the Elder is appointed by the local First Nation. In the Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division a traditional feast was used to help select an Elder. The North Battleford Roman Catholic Separate School Division relies on the Battlefords Tribal Council to help select Elders to visit schools. The Moose Jaw School Division advertised their counsellor/facilitator position at Prince Arthur School – the successful candidate was an Elder.

5. Reimbursement and Payment

The reimbursement for the services of an Elder may be a sensitive issue. School divisions report that some Elders are uncomfortable with a "salary". They often prefer an honorarium. The method of payment will also depend upon whether the Elder is working full-time or visits the school occasionally.

Aboriginal organizations have also expressed concern that some Elders are not reimbursed fairly for their knowledge and services. Elders do not have certificates or degrees to reflect their expertise, which has been developed over many years through traditional methods. This knowledge and expertise is specialized and extremely important within the Aboriginal community. When reimbursing Elders, this expertise should be taken into consideration.

School divisions are encouraged to seek the assistance of Aboriginal organizations to determine local customs and policies and to discuss the gifts and payment for the services of Elders. You may also wish to speak to Elders individually

Gifts

"Long ago, one gave an Elder a gift of value for that time. The gift would be something the Elder needed. It might be a horse, a weapon or a tool to make a better life. Today, an honorarium is often the most appropriate gift. An honorarium is considered a gift not a payment. Therefore, most Elders will not state how much of an honorarium they should receive – it is not proper to ask for a gift. A reimbursement for out-of-pocket costs such as travel and accommodation expenses is often considered a payment. A school division should call the local tribal council or band for assistance."

– Darrell Greyeyes, Elder, Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

about their preferences and any concerns they have about gifts and reimbursement for services.

Selecting a Coordinator/Supervisor

Establishing a system of guidance and supervision for the program can help the program develop effectively. During the initial stages of the program the Elder, community worker or other resource person will need guidance and support to implement the program.

The coordinator/supervisor should be someone who has the time and capacity to listen to the suggestions and concerns of all those involved. For example, one school division found that teachers were not asking the Elder to visit the classroom. When the program coordinator talked to teachers, he found out that teachers did not know how the Elder could participate in classroom activities and were unsure about asking the Elder. The coordinator then arranged a session for teachers where the Elder explained various options. In agreement with the teachers and the Elder, the coordinator developed a monthly schedule of classroom visits by the Elder.

Orientation

An orientation process can have enormous impact on the success of the program. Orientation is important for all involved, including the:

- Elder, community worker or other resource person;
- board of education and school-level groups such as school council, parent organization or local board of trustees;
- teachers and staff;
- students; and,
- families and community.

Depending on the audience, some of the following suggested topics may help you in planning your orientation process:

- why the program is needed, the benefits and intended outcomes;
- role of the Elder, community worker or other resource person;
- the involvement of the Aboriginal community in designing and implementing the program;
- diversity within the Aboriginal community;
- the spiritual nature of some traditions and ceremonies;
    - they are not presented to impose a specific religious belief but to help students, staff and community gain a greater appreciation for Aboriginal culture;
- how teachers can be involved in the program, for example:

    - inviting an Elder into the classroom for storytelling, talking circles or teaching traditional skills and crafts; or,
    - referring a student to an community worker for counselling or a home visit;
- the traditional role of an Elder in Aboriginal communities, including:
    - Elder's ongoing obligation to the community;
    - respect;
    - specialization;
    - spirituality; and,
    - protocol;
- traditional ceremonies and activities, including;
    - the use of tobacco;
    - ceremonies and which, if any, will be offered in the school;
    - sacred objects such as drums and pipes; and,
    - the sacred nature of ceremonies and the essential role of an Elder in interpreting the ceremonies;
- how students can benefit from the program and how students can received individual services;
- honouring student or family choice not to participate in spiritual ceremonies;
- how families or community members can become involved or receive individual services; and,
- how to provide feedback about the program.

The First Year

The first year of the program will most likely entail a certain amount of flexibility on behalf of all involved. It can be expected that not all ideas will work. Some activities may be successful from the beginning, while others may require adaptation or may prove to be unsuitable. As the year progresses, everyone involved will gain a greater understanding of the potential of the program, resulting in activities and services that are more focused.

A number of school divisions suggest scheduling activities such as classroom visits, home visits and community times during the first year. This enables the Elder, community worker or other resource person to meet students, teachers and families and gain an understanding of the needs within the school. Scheduled classroom visits can help teachers learn more about how the individual can assist in the classroom. Scheduling may only be required in the initial year.

Appendices

A. Examples of School Division Protocols and Guidelines For Aboriginal Elders

- North West Roman Catholic Separate School Division
- Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division
- Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

B. Example of a Job Description for a Cultural Advisor

- Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

C. Examples of Programs

D. Resources

Appendix A

Examples of School Division Protocols and Guidelines for Aboriginal Elders

North West Roman Catholic Separate School Division

The following is an excerpt from the North West Roman Catholic Separate School Division's *Education Equity Manual*.

Protocol for Elder

The following is a guide for schools to use when planning on approaching an Elder to request a school visit.

1. Know what information you would like to find out.

2. Phone the Elder to schedule a person to person meeting. If there is no phone, then arrange for a meeting through the tribal council or band.

3. Person to person meeting:
   - Greet the Elder with a handshake.
   - Offer a package of tobacco for his or her guidance and ask the Elder what information he/she is to explain to the students or you.
   - The Elder will give thanks to the Creator for the tobacco by prayer.
   - If you have the opportunity to transport the Elder, please do!
   - Give a small gift to the Elder at the end of the presentation.
   - The Elder will again give thanks by prayer for the gift.

Contact the Tribal Council for more information regarding names of Elders to contact.

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division

The following is an excerpt from the Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division's 1995 description of an Elders Program. The program involved three Elders, one full-time and two half-time, providing services to six inner-city schools.

Protocol
Traditionally, Elders are not employees, but are cultural resource people and counsellors.

The Saskatchewan Indian Federated College and other First Nations organizations generally provide Elders with an honorarium. A contractual arrangement is probably the best method of payment.

1. Respect
The First Nations community has tremendous respect for their Elders. Schools and school divisions must exemplify this respect in their interactions with Elders.

2. Protocol
There are established traditions and guidelines in the following areas:

- invitations;
- theme;
- time;
- group size;
- talking circles; and,
- honorarium.

Schools should be knowledgeable about this protocol.

3. Communication
Not all Elders can provide quality services to school-age children. There needs to be an ongoing dialogue with the First Nations community.

4. Culturally Compatible Services
One of the major strengths of the First Nations community has been the involvement and leadership of Elders. Across the province, you will find many successful culturally compatible programs and services that are greatly enhanced by Elders interacting with students.

Role of Elders in Schools:

Elders are a very important resource to schools. They provide an understanding of First Nations tradition, values and perspectives. Elders are not only cultural and spiritual leaders but in recent years have been more involved as counsellors in schools and other institutions.

Elders can enhance the education process by:

- developing in the students a positive First Nations identity;
- developing students' self-esteem by providing personal and social counselling from a traditional perspective;
- promoting cultural awareness; and,
- providing schools with a First Nations perspective on heritage, tradition, culture and values.

– Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division, 1995

Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

The following is an excerpt from the Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division's guidelines for *Cultural Enrichment Provided by Aboriginal Resource People.*

Aboriginal Elders

Among the many various Aboriginal Nations and communities there is a strong subscription to the concept of Elders. Each Aboriginal community and person can have their own set of understandings, protocol, practices and beliefs that relate to Elders, and we are advised to be sensitive to, and to be respectful of, these many possible diversities.

There is, however, among the various Aboriginal Nations and communities in Western Canada, something of a commonly shared core of understandings, protocols, practices and beliefs. It will be our attempt to represent this common core, while still being aware and respectful of some unique differences.

Elders are the most important resource for gaining an understanding of Aboriginal traditions and values. They are the men and women who have earned respect for their wisdom and perseverance. They are knowledgeable in the ways of human conduct and have come to be spiritual leaders.

Acknowledgement and Appreciation

Traditionally, approaching an Elder involves the ceremonial offering of tobacco or tobacco products. The essence of this offering lies in the traditional sacred nature of tobacco, and has little to do with whether or not the Elder is a recreational user of tobacco.

Aside from offering tobacco as part of an approach, some points need to be made about giving and receiving. "Prior to an Elder sharing knowledge it is essential that you and your students complete the cycle of giving and receiving through an appropriate offering. This offering symbolizes the respect and appreciation for knowledge shared by an Elder. One must ascertain the nature of the offering prior to an Elder's visit, as traditions differ throughout Aboriginal communities."
(Saskatchewan Education, Aboriginal Education Unit)

- The recipient of an Elder's service is responsible for his/her total care including transportation, meals and lodging required to facilitate the Elder's visit.
- The recipient knows what the service is worth. An Elder is usually presented with gift(s) and/or honoraria which reflect the value placed on the service to be rendered. Honoraria will vary depending on the value placed on the visit, the time spent in the school and means available to do so. We present our recognized Elders with an honorarium plus expenses based on the length and type of visitation made. For some Aboriginal cultures, giving four gifts projects respect for the traditional sacred quality of the number four.
- Gift-giving can be viewed as a symbolic act of giving to the Elder's ancestors from whence his knowledge comes.
- An offering of tobacco is directed to the spirit of the Elder and is presented in addition to any other gift or honoraria.
- The Elder may request an additional spiritual offering such as cloth.

Access and Protocol

Those who are not familiar with Eldership may understandably feel inadequate and fearful of making mistakes in contacting an Elder and in seeking what it is that an Elder may have to offer. One should not be overly fearful of "making mistakes". Elders are very understanding of those who make mistakes in an attempt to learn. The knowledge that you have "done your best" and will learn from your mistakes will be perceived by the Elder as part of your learning process.

To be Respectful of an Elder

Following are some strategies and other considerations, which may be useful and encouraging.

- Get to know the protocol customary in your region. You may wish to seek assistance from your local tribal council, friendship centre or Aboriginal Education Consultant.
- Invitations should be made in person. A gift of tobacco or cloth could be made at this time.
- Accept offering and suggestions made by an Elder.
- Avoid interrupting or correcting an Elder.

Aboriginal Role Models/Resource Persons

Aboriginal role model/resource persons differ from Elders in that they would be valued for knowledge or a particular skill which is culturally enriching for students. It would be unlikely that they would meet all the criteria accepted for the identification of an Elder.

Visits by these individuals may be sought and carried out much the same as other business transactions, or voluntary services, whichever the case may be. It is appropriate to determine beforehand whether the service is being done voluntarily or if remuneration is required.

– Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

- Discuss what the students are learning and what you hope the Elder's visit will provide. This will allow the Elder to adequately prepare for the visit with reflection and prayer.

- Ensure that the necessary transportation, meals and lodging for the visit are provided.

- Have a staff member or parent, preferably one known to the Elder, available to greet the Elder upon arrival, 20-30 minutes before the class starts. Your hospitality will make the Elder feel welcome and comfortable.

- Ensure that the staff and students are aware of the Elder's visit beforehand, including appropriate behaviour.

- Be flexible regarding the class length. You may suggest guidelines beforehand. Be particularly sensitive to ending the visit with dignity.

- Arrange for smaller groups that do not require a microphone (unless requested by the Elder). Arrange the students in a circular or semi-circular seating arrangement.

- Give the Elder a gift(s) and/or honorarium, as well as expense reimbursement.

Appendix B

Example of a Job Description for a Cultural Advisor

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

Job Description for Aboriginal Cultural Advisor

Reports to:
Aboriginal Cultural Advisors report directly to the Principal.

General Description:
Aboriginal Cultural Advisors provide assistance to students, their parents/guardians and school staff where students are experiencing social, emotional or behavioural problems. As well, the Aboriginal Cultural Advisor provides enhanced Aboriginal cultural perspectives, awareness and guidance to students, families and school staff.

Required Education, Knowledge, Qualification and Experience:

- Two years of post-secondary training in social work, human justice or equivalent post-secondary education in a related area from a provincially recognized institution. A bachelor degree in social work, psychology, sociology or equivalent degree program would be an asset.
- A valid driver's licence.
- Extensive knowledge of the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal culture.
- Experience in the delivery of human services would be an asset. (Human services in this context refers to experience in areas such as social work, health care, justice, counselling and community development.)
- Training in mediation would be an asset.

Required Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality in school division operations.
- Ability to work as a member of a team.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to use a computer for word processing would be an asset.
- Fluency in a resident Aboriginal language.

Supervision of Other Staff:

- This position does not involve the supervision of other staff.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Without restricting the generality of the description above, the Aboriginal Cultural Advisor shall perform such duties and responsibilities as may be assigned including but not restricted to the following:

- be willing to engage in life-long learning with respect to training, in-services and courses of study;
- deal empathetically with staff, students, parents and the public; and,
- be knowledgeable and supportive of applicable Board policies.

- In the area of counselling:
  - provide case coordination for students who are experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioural problems;
  - promote effective integration of community and school-based services to assist students and their families;
  - provide counselling to students and their families;
  - initiate referrals of students and their families to other human service agencies;
  - assist other human service agencies in planning and implementing services to students and their families;
  - assist in the development and/or implementation of programs and activities for individuals and groups; and,
  - maintain records of individual cases. These case records will be accurate, concise and outline the action taken by the Aboriginal Cultural Advisor.

- In the area of cultural awareness:
  - provide enhanced Aboriginal cultural perspectives, awareness and guidance to students, families and school staff;
  - enhance linkages to the Aboriginal community;
  - increase the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the education of their children; and,
  - assume other counselling and cultural duties as assigned by the Superintendent responsible for Aboriginal Education.

Judgement, Independence and Client Contact:

- Confidentiality:
  At no time should an Aboriginal Cultural Advisor discuss, in public, information pertaining to a student. An Aboriginal

Cultural Advisor is expected to respect the confidential nature of the position by avoiding discussion about any topics that are not formally communicated to the public by the administration of the school or the school division. Breaching confidentiality is a serious violation of acceptable conduct.

- Independence:
  An Aboriginal Cultural Advisor is expected to work independently.

Working jointly with Other Staff on Common Assignments or Tasks:
This position involves working jointly with human service providers, educational associates, teachers, and school-based administration on a daily basis.

Responsibility for quality of Assigned Work:
The Aboriginal Cultural Advisor receives general supervision and is solely responsible for the quality of the assigned work. The efficient relay of timely information is dependent on the quality of the work. The "first impression" image of organization is dependent upon the quality of the work. The employee is expected to seek clarification and direction on any matters of concern.

Appendix C

Examples of Programs

Throughout Saskatchewan many school divisions have established programs involving Aboriginal resource people. This section of the guide provides a summary of a few of these initiatives.

The following summaries are included:

- Biggar School Division – Cando Central School
- Ile a La Crosse School Division – Rossignol Community School
- Maple Creek School Division – Maple Creek Schools
- Meadow Lake School Division – Meadow Lake Schools
- Moose Jaw School Division – Prince Arthur School
- Nipawin School Division – Nipawin Schools
- Northern Lights School Division
  - La Loche Community School
  - Gordon Denny Community School
- Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division – St. Mary's High School
- Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division – Division-Wide Program
- Regina Public School Division
  - Kitchener Community School
  - Scott Collegiate
- St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division
  - St. Mary's Community School
  - Joe Duquette High School
- Saskatchewan Rivers School Division
  - Division Wide Cultural Advisor Program
  - Won Ska School
- Saskatoon School Division
  - Pleasant Hill Community School
  - King George Community School

Summaries

Each summary includes:

- a description of the initiative;
- the role played by the Aboriginal resource person;
- program details;
- advice from the school division;
- contacts; and,
- partnerships, if applicable.

Biggar School Division

Aboriginal Counsellor
Cando Central School

Description
- Cando Central School is a small K-12 school with 83% of the student population of Aboriginal background, the majority from nearby First Nations.
- Approximately 30% of students are not living with their parents. Another 27% of students are from single parent families.
- The Aboriginal Counsellor works two days per week.

Major Role
The Aboriginal Counsellor's major roles include:
- counselling individuals and groups;
- encouraging parent and community involvement; and,
- providing conflict resolution and mediation for students.

Program Details/Comments
- The Aboriginal Counsellor works closely with the personal counsellor from the Greenhead Health District who also works one-day per week in the school.
- The school has implemented an addiction counselling service for students in cooperation with the Greenhead Health District.
- A Traditional Aboriginal Parenting Curriculum has also been introduced.

Contact:

Principal

Cando Central School
Box 250
CANDO SK
S0K 0V0

PH: 937-3934
FAX: 937-7488

Partnerships:

- Mosquito First Nation
- Red Pheasant First Nation
- Greenhead Health District

Ile a la Crosse School Division

Elder Program
Rossignol Community School

Contact:

Director of Education
Ile a la Crosse School Division

PH: 752-2390
FAX: 752-5185

or

Principal
Rossignol Community School

PH: 833-2010
FAX: 833-2322

Box 70
ILE A LA CROSSE SK
SOM 1C0

Description

- The school is K-12 with an enrolment of 526 students.
- There are three off-campus Adult Education Programs (Store Front, ABE 5-10 and Adult 12).
- The community of Ile a la Crosse is almost entirely Métis; complete with its own Michif language.
- The Home/School Liaison Officer/Community School Coordinator is responsible for the identification of community members, in particular Elders, who are willing to visit the school to share their talents and give guidance when requested.

Major Role

The major role of Elders include:

- assisting teachers with curricula (the Community School Coordinator matches Elders with teacher requests);
- advising in the development of the Locally Determined Option of Michif Language/Culture/Outdoor Education; and,
- chaperoning and instructing students during Culture Camps.

Program Details/Comments

- The program is in its infancy, having just started September 1, 1999.
- Numerous Elders are being used as needs dictate.
- Elders receive an honorarium and/or gifts, based on the time spent in the school or on school business (either one-half day or full day).
- The largest obstacle being faced is getting Elders to come to the school. Activities designed to make Elders and other community resource people feel more at home in the school are presently being explored.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Be prepared to provide transportation needed to get Elders to the school and back home.
- Be prepared to have someone responsible for time tabling the use of Elders and reminding them of when they are needed, on the day they are needed.

Maple Creek School Division

Elder in Residence

Sidney Street Elementary School
Maple Creek Composite High School

Description

- The elementary school is K-7 and the high school is 8-12 with 15% Aboriginal student population.
- The Elder attends the high school two-days/week and the elementary school one-day/week.

Major Role

The Elder's major roles include:

- promoting cultural, traditional and spiritual understanding;
- counselling/advising individuals and groups;
- meeting with parents;
- screening school materials for cultural appropriateness;
- organizing healing circles;
- assisting with Cree Language class; and,
- assisting teachers in adapting the curriculum to include Indian and Métis content – e.g., teaches units on herbs and on beading in Home Economics, or on legends in elementary school.

Program Details/Comments

- The Elder receives a substitute teacher salary. This allows the Elder the flexibility to attend to her community cultural obligations.
- The schools have a welcoming ceremony for the Elder at the beginning of the school year – the ceremony has now expanded to include others who work in the school (health district staff, shared services staff).

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- It is very important to work through a First Nation, tribal council or other authority to find and appoint an Elder.
- The school must have a clear idea of what is wanted from the program before beginning.
- Schedule classroom and individual visits for the first year until everyone is familiar with the program (traditionally, Elders wait to be invited/asked).
- Develop an understanding of the traditions/protocols and inform all involved – e.g., why tobacco is given, what the Elder does with it, and why it is allowed in a smoke-free school.

Contact:

Director of Education

Maple Creek School Division
Box 400
MAPLE CREEK SK
S0N 1N0

PH: 662-2424
FAX: 662-3173

Partnerships:

- Nekaneet First Nation Education Council

Meadow Lake School Division

Grandmothers Program
Lakeview and Jubilee Elementary Schools
Jonas Samson Junior High School

Contact:

Director of Education

Meadow Lake School Division
606 – 5th Avenue West
MEADOW LAKE SK
S9X 1A9

PH: 236-5614
FAX: 236-3922

or

Community School Associate

Lakeview Elementary School
304 – 8th Avenue East
MEADOW LAKE SK
S9X 1A9

PH: 236-5810
FAX: 236-3050

Partnerships:

- Flying Dust First Nation

Description

- Meadow Lake is a growing community with a significant Aboriginal population. The elementary schools are K-5 and both have enrollments exceeding 400 students. The junior high encompasses Grades 6-9 with a student population of over 550.
- A designated grandmother is assigned to each school (the Cree teacher is the Grandmother in the junior high).

Major Role

The Grandmothers' major roles include:

- meeting the day to day needs of students;
- coordinating "welcome wagon" program for the school;
- conducting home visits regarding attendance;
- counselling/advising students;
- phoning homes regarding attendance;
- encouraging parents to become involved;
- finding volunteers for school activities; and,
- monitoring nutrition programs.

Program Details/Comments

- The Grandmothers are full time employees of the school division.
- The program has been operating for three years.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Recognize that the grandmothers are not social workers – home visits are limited to attendance discussions and offers of assistance. The visits should be kept light and positive.
- The grandmothers should not mind getting hugs.

Moose Jaw School Division

Elder in Residence
Prince Arthur School, Moose Jaw

Description
- Prince Arthur School is a K-8 school in the central area of Moose Jaw.
- The Elder works out of Prince Arthur School but goes to any school in Moose Jaw when requested. She also works closely with SIAST.
- The initial year involved a lot of home visits and social activities to get parents to school. Currently, she does not conduct as many home visits because many parents are now involved.
- She wrote a Christmas play that involved 100 students (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and the community.
- The Elder is nationally recognized for her work. She is also a resource person for Corrections Canada and is often asked to speak to groups in Moose Jaw and throughout Canada.

Major Role
The Elder's major roles include:
- encouraging Aboriginal parents to become involved in their child's education and to come into the school;
- providing advice to students and parents; and,
- helping non-Aboriginal students and staff understand Aboriginal culture, traditions and spirituality.

Program Details/Comments
- The school advertised for an Aboriginal facilitator. The successful candidate was an Elder and the program developed through the leadership of the Elder.
- The school considers the program to be extremely successful:
  - had 14% of student body with Aboriginal ancestry when project began four years ago – the school now has 30% (combination of growth of Aboriginal population in the city and the school attracting Aboriginal families because of the program in the school and the work of the Elder at SIAST).

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- Careful screening of candidates is very important:
  - formal education training is not as important as significant knowledge of Aboriginal culture and traditions.

Contact:

Principal

Prince Arthur School
645 Athabasca Street
MOOSE JAW SK
S6H 7Z5

Ph: 692-3904
Fax: 692-4557

Partnerships:

The program was initially developed by the school with advice from an Aboriginal community leader and Aboriginal school staff. There are no First Nations close to Moose Jaw and there were no Aboriginal organizations in the city at that time.

The school now has the *Prince Arthur School Aboriginal Advisory Council* to assist in identifying needs and solutions.

Information Sheets:

The Elder has developed information sheets explaining the protocol involved in attending traditional ceremonies. For more information, call Mrs. Betty McKenna at Prince Arthur School.

Nipawin School Division

Community Outreach
Wagner School
L. P. Miller Comprehensive High School

Contact:

Director of Education

Nipawin School Division
Box 2044
NIPAWIN SK
S0E 1E0

PH: 862-4616
FAX: 862-9733

Partnerships:

- Métis Organization
- Eastside Limb Outreach (local organization comprised of three bands)

Description

- Nipawin has had a significant increase in Aboriginal population in the late 80s and 90s (5% in 1980 to 20% now). Many of the students have moved from First Nation schools and often experience difficulties in the transition to the provincial system.
- Two people provide outreach to Aboriginal students and families in Nipawin – an Outreach Worker and an Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor.

Major Role

The outreach worker's major roles include:

- providing personal counselling at the elementary schools (informal counselling);
- conducting home visits;
- encouraging parents to become involved in school; and,
- coordinating after-school youth activities.

The Aboriginal Liaison Counsellor's major roles include:

- providing personal and career counselling at the high school (structured counselling);
- welcoming and orienting new students;
- initiating and/or participating in interagency collaboration (e.g., Youth Centre);
- coordinating multi-group response to student needs;
- coordinating student leadership activities; and,
- coordinating Métis and First Nation dance groups.

Program Details/Comments

- Since the implementation of the initiative, there has been an increase in the number of Aboriginal leaders and resource people coming into the school as speakers.
- Both individuals provide a positive role model for students.
- Both also coordinate trips to local First Nation and Métis events to increase cultural understanding and knowledge of traditions.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Be aware of the views of the local Aboriginal community.
- Make sure the outreach worker or Elder is respected in the community.

Northern Lights School Division

Elders Programs
La Loche Community School

Description
- La Loche Community School (Ducharme Building) is a K-6 school with approximately 560 students in the Northwest corner of Saskatchewan. The Dene Building includes 360 students in Grades 7-12.
- 99% of the students are Dene people and, for most, Dene is their first language.
- Elders and other significant community resource people (artists and people possessing traditional skills such as beading, skiff building, fishing, etc.) are or will be employed in school and at cultural camps held in the fall, winter and spring.

Major Role
The Elders' major roles include:
- teaching traditional cultural skills at cultural camps – trapping, fishing, beading, storytelling;
- encouraging students to solve problems through individual counselling sessions;
- acting as liaisons between the school and community; and,
- encouraging non-Aboriginal staff to learn the cultural ways of the Dene people.

Program Details/Comments
- A variety of Elders and community resource people are involved in this program. This increases community involvement in the school.
- Elders are paid as contractors.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- Use local support staff from the community to identify important Elders and people who possess skills that the community wants passed on.
- Whenever possible allow the interaction between Elder and student to take place outside the regular classroom.

Contact:

Principal

La Loche Community School
Bag Service #4
LA LOCHE SK
SOM 1G0

Dene Building
PH: 822-2223
FAX: 822-2344

Ducharme Building
PH: 822-2024
FAX: 822-2280

Partnerships:

- La Loche Recreation Board
- Northern Village of La Loche
- La Loche Community Development Corportation
- La Loche Local School Board

These groups contribute money, support and suggestions for Elders and project ideas.

Northern Lights School Division

Elder Program

Gordon Denny Community School, Air Ronge

Contact:

Principal

Gordon Denny Community School
Bag Service 7300
LA RONGE SK
S0J 1L0

PH: 425-2997
FAX: 425-2266

Description

- Gordon Denny Community School has close to 250 students K-6. Approximately 80% of the students are Aboriginal.
- The Elders and Cultural Program is a new three-year initiative to foster a connection between Elders and the younger generation. Over the three years a variety of activities will be organized, beginning with the Photo Gallery, which helps Elders feel welcome in the school, to having Elders participate regularly in classroom activities and advise on school decision making.

Major Role

The Elders' major roles include:

- providing individual staff and student consultations;
- participating/instructing at Cultural Days;
- advising school staff and administrators on school policies; and,
- assisting classroom teachers with Aboriginal knowledge, crafts, language and skills.

Program Details/Comments

- The Elders and Cultural Program will also include students visiting Elders in their homes to show their respect.
- A video documenting the knowledge of the Elders and the historical development of the local area is being produced in cooperation with a northern Aboriginal television production company.
- Special days like Grandparents' Day will be celebrated to recognize the contributions of Elders from all cultural backgrounds.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Social activities are a good beginning. Feasts and displays such as the Photo Gallery help Elders and other community members feel more comfortable in the school.
- Ask the Elders themselves how they wish to be involved in the school.

Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Elder in Residence

St. Mary's High School, Prince Albert

Description

- The school division employs an Elder and an Outreach worker. They work closely together. Both are full-time employees of the school division. They have offices in St. Mary's High School, but provide services to all schools within the division.
- The Elder is of Cree background, but provides information on other First Nation traditions and spirituality.
- The Elder has primary responsibility for education regarding traditions and spirituality (integrating Christian and First Nation spirituality).
- The Outreach Worker is responsible for helping individual students with academic and social situations, and has primary responsibility for student counselling.

Major Role

The Elder's major roles include:

- promoting awareness of First Nations cultural traditions and spirituality;
- conducting home visits;
- participating in and/or leading workshops and events;
- acting as a liaison between First Nation organizations and the school system; and,
- providing some student counselling.

Program Details/Comments

- The division spent considerable time consulting the community and developing a protocol. They do not feel it would be appropriate to place an advertisement to hire an Elder. (See Appendix A for the division's guidelines and protocol.)
- They are very pleased with the program and have seen many positive results including more parent involvement.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Awareness of community needs and views is crucial.
- The school division stresses the importance of protocol and sensitivity to the process and community politics in approaching and choosing an Elder for a program.

Contact:

Assistant Director

Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division
118 – 11th Street E.
PRINCE ALBERT SK
S6V 1A1

PH: 953-7500
FAX: 763-1723

Partnerships:

The program was developed in cooperation with:

- Prince Albert Tribal Council
- Beardy First Nation in Duck Lake
- Duck Lake Parish

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Division-Wide Elders Program

Contact:

Superintendent of Instruction

Regina RCSSD
2160 Cameron Street
REGINA SK
S4T 2V6

PH: 791-7324
FAX: 347-7699

Description

- The school division has a division-wide program that encourages all schools to invite Elders into schools. The division's Aboriginal Consultant contacts Elders on behalf of schools and teachers.
- In addition, individual Elder programs exist at Storefront and St. Augustine Community School.
- Elders are available to schools on an as need basis.

Major Role

An Elder's major roles include:

- providing a role model;
- promoting awareness and understanding of Aboriginal cultures and traditions; and,
- providing support to Aboriginal students and their families.

Program Details/Comments

- During the last year, 20 of the 27 schools within the division have brought Elders into the school at least once.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- It is important that teachers and students receive some cultural awareness/understanding prior to bringing an Elder into the school.
- Be clear on why you want Elders involved and what you want them to do in the school and the outcomes you want.
- Work out the payment details before hand (how much, methods, when) and, if possible, pay an honorarium as opposed to a salary.
- Assign a liaison to the Elder to guide and supervise/monitor the program.
- Carefully select/assign the Elder according to the needs of the school and the specific project.
- Know the protocols surrounding Elders.
- Be cautious in having Elders perform counselling (e.g., confidentiality, qualifications).
- If criminal record checks are mandatory in the school division, be sensitive when explaining this to an Elder because he or she may be offended.

Regina Public School Division

Elder Teams
Kitchener Community School

Description
- The Regina School Division has had a variety of projects involving Elders over the years. Some projects included hiring Elders as full-time staff. The division is now leaning more toward having Elders in the schools on an occasional basis depending on the specific need.
- In 1998, the division participated in a project that involved a team of two Elders working in Kitchener Community School. The three-month program enabled the Elders to work in classrooms two or three days a week.

Major Role
The Elders' major roles include:
- acting as a role model;
- providing guidance to students;
- visiting classrooms;
- meeting with small groups of students; and,
- meeting with individual students.

Program Details/Comments
- The division views Elders in a broad sense – valuing the wisdom of older, respected people from all cultures and backgrounds.
- For some students of Aboriginal ancestry, Elders provide a historical link to their past.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- It is difficult for one Elder to serve all the needs of students and schools.
- It is important that staff receive an orientation to the program so that they fully understand the purpose and benefits, and that they are involved in the design and implementation.

Contact:

Assistant Superintendent

Regina Public School Division
1600 – 4th Avenue
REGINA SK
S4R 8C8

PH: 791-8219
FAX: 352-2898

or

Principal

Kitchener Community School
840 Athol Street
REGINA SK
S4T 3B5

PH: 791-8516
FAX: 751-2164

Regina Public School Division

Elder in Residence
Scott Collegiate

Contact:

Principal

Scott Collegiate
3350 – 7th Avenue
REGINA SK
S4T 0P6

PH: 791-8415
FAX: 791-8694

Description
- Scott Collegiate is an inner-city high school specializing in programs for Aboriginal youth. There are approximately 250 students at Scott, a majority of Aboriginal ancestry.
- An Elder, along with an advisory council, coordinated Elder programs and services within the school. Students could access the services and programs on a voluntary basis.
- The program evolved into a process of visiting Elders and cultural resource people who served in a variety of capacities according to student, staff and community needs.

Major Role
The Elders' major roles include:
- conducting talking/healing circles;
- bring students back to the teachings of the medicine wheel for healing;
- helping create an atmosphere of respect and pride; and,
- promoting the self-development of youth.

Program Details/Comments
- The committee met on a regular basis to evaluate and approve projects, oversee the budget and approve and distribute funding for Elders.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- Ensure that Elders represent the cultural diversity within the community and provide a variety of supports to students.
- Establish protocols, compensations and guidelines before the program begins. Consider a variety of examples to raise potential issues before beginning the program.
- Consider "visiting elders" to facilitate a range of cultural and philosophical perspectives. A system of rotating Elders may be most appropriate for some communities.

St Paul Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Elder in Residence

St. Mary's Community School, Saskatoon

Description

- St. Mary's Community School is a PreK-8 inner-city school in Saskatoon with almost all of its student population of Aboriginal ancestry.
- The Elder is employed part-time.
- The Elder works closely with the Aboriginal Home/School Liaison Worker. Their roles are differentiated – the Elder helps keep traditions and cultural knowledge and pride in the forefront, while the Home/School Liaison Worker helps students and families with attendance problems and other concerns that affect the performance of the students.

Major Role

The Elder's major roles include:

- providing personal counselling to students;
- providing family guidance and counselling;
- promoting cultural awareness;
- conducting/coordinating traditional ceremonies;
- providing a role model/grandmother figure for students;
- teaching traditional crafts;
- encouraging the use of the Cree language; and,
- assisting teachers in the classroom – as a resource person and team teaching with teachers.

Program Details/Comments

- The school's Cultural Resource Teacher and other Aboriginal staff at the school and in the division helped develop the program.
- The school finds the combination of the Elder and the Home/School Liaison Worker very effective.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Carefully define what you want the Elder to do – St. Mary's has separated the work of the Elder and the Home/School Liaison Worker (the Elder does not deal with attendance issues).
- It is important to select an Elder who can work effectively with children.
- The Elder must display strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work with children.

Contact:

Principal

St. Mary's Community School
337 Avenue O South
SASKATOON SK
S7M 2R9

PH: 668-7400
FAX: 668-7404

St Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Elder in Residence

Joe Duquette High School, Saskatoon

Contact:

Principal

Joe Duquette High School
919 Broadway Avenue
SASKATOON SK
S7N 1B8

PH: 668-7490
FAX: 668-7488

Description

- Joe Duquette High School is an associate school that enjoys direction and involvement of an active parent and community group. The school serves an Aboriginal student population of 225.
- Joe Duquette High School provides a safe, stable learning environment directed at having students realize academic success and personal healing.
- The Elder provides direction in school programming from a First Nations spiritual/cultural dimension. The Elder guides staff and students in decision making and counsels staff and students in a traditional manner.

Major Role

The Elder's major roles include:

- providing personal counselling to students and staff;
- advising in the areas of cultural traditions and protocols;
- coordinating and conducting traditional ceremonies;
- encouraging the use of the Cree language; and,
- offering spiritual guidance for the students and staff.

Program Details/Comments

- The school has developed a course of action, beliefs and objectives that are integrally related to First Nations culture and beliefs. The Elder has played an important role in providing the community, students, staff and administration with relevant protocols, direction and advice that have resulted in exemplary school status.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Respect the role of the Elder. Elders must be given the opportunity to enter into a trust relationship with the school.
- The Elder's direction must be seen as informed by history, traditional teachings and spiritual guidance.
- The Elder's advice should be sought on matters of significant importance and their advice respected.

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

Cultural Advisor
Elders

Description

- The Saskatchewan Rivers School Division includes the city of Prince Albert and surrounding rural areas. There are a number of First Nations and Métis peoples and organizations within the division.
- Division initiatives include an Elder in Residence at Won Ska, Liaison Workers in the *Community Within a Community Program* at Carleton Comprehensive High School and the Cultural Advisor Initiative.
- A Cultural Advisor:
  - is an employee of the school division;
  - is very familiar with the community; and,
  - helps find appropriate Elders for the schools, families and community (the Elders chosen would depend on the requirements of each situation).

Major Role

- The Cultural Advisor focuses on history, lifestyle and crafts.
- An Elder's major focus is spirituality and way of life (very experienced teacher of the ways). An Elder:
  - passes on knowledge of traditions in terms of duties and beliefs;
  - specializes in certain areas and crafts; and,
  - is well-known and respected in the community.

Program Details/Comments

- Elders receive an honorarium, if requested, in addition to the gifts (according to the specific protocol of the First Nation).
- The school division considers Elders to be beneficial as role models and mentors for students and in helping encourage students to stay in school.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Be cautious about "misusing" Elders by asking them to be experts in many areas.
- Be cautious about "self-proclaimed" Elders. Contact local tribal councils and First Nations for lists of recommended Elders.

Contact:

Aboriginal Educational Advisor

or

Superintendent of Education

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division
545 – 11th Street East
PRINCE ALBERT SK
S6V 1B1

PH: 764-1571
FAX: 763-4460

Partnerships:

- Muskoday First Nation

Saskatchewan Rivers School Division

Elder in Residence
Won Ska, Prince Albert

Contact:

Principal

Won-Ska Cultural School
2005 – 4th Avenue
PRINCE ALBERT SK
S6V 2H1

PH: 763-3552
FAX: 763-0156

Partnerships:

- Saskatchewan Education
- Parent Advisory Group

Description
- Won Ska has been in existence for seven years. The school is specifically geared toward Aboriginal students. There are 50 students attending between 16 and 21 years of age. Many of the students have serious issues and have experienced difficulty in the regular school system.
- The Elder is full time and is integrally involved with the school program. She connects with every student.

Major Role
The Elder's major roles include:
- advising students regarding Aboriginal cultural traditions;
- providing first-line counselling;
- guiding students to significant therapeutic counselling;
- conducting talking circles;
- coordinating with other agencies e.g., Social Services, Justice; and,
- coordinating with local First Nations to organize traditional ceremonies and activities such as pipe ceremonies, feasts and naming ceremonies.

Program Details/Comments
- The Elder is also the half-time cultural arts teacher.
- Another Elder works half-time in the school.
- The Elder is given a choice between being on salary or contract (180 days per year).

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- Be extremely careful in selecting the Elder. Be open in explaining that a criminal record check has to be conducted.
- If the Elder is to counsel students, they must have qualifications. A major role of the Elder is to direct/guide/encourage students to seek qualified counsellors (e.g., drug and alcohol counselling, sexual abuse counselling).
- When selecting an Elder in residence, a school needs to balance cultural knowledge with qualifications, especially as it relates to counselling.
- At the beginning of the program be very clear about the expectations around time of the work day, number of days per year to be worked and how other cultural obligations to the community will be considered.

Saskatoon School Division

Elder in Residence
Pleasant Hill Community School

Description
- Pleasant Hill Community School is a PreK-8 inner-city school with an 87% Aboriginal student population.
- The Elder in residence program has been in existence for four years.
- The Elder spends three-days/week in the school and two-days/week counselling in the community for the Saskatoon Tribal Council.
- The Elder is a resource person to the community (e.g., St. Paul's Hospital, Police Youth Programs) and to the Four Directions Program at Estey School.

Major Role
The Elder's major roles include:
- promoting cultural understanding among students, staff and community;
- helping school and community understand the role of an Elder;
- providing guidance to groups by discussing traditional values as well as current issues (e.g., sharing circles in classrooms);
- providing one-to-one counselling/advising/listening for students and parents;
- conducting home visits, especially with new families; and,
- bringing parents into the school.

Program Details/Comments
- The school used word-of-mouth within the Aboriginal community and among organizations as the method of advertising. They also relied upon the expertise of the school division's Indian and Métis Education Consultant.
- The Elder receives an honorarium, which the school believes is the most appropriate method of reimbursement for an Elder.
- The school division considers the program very successful – the Elder is respected in the school, community and city.
- The school division staff credits the Elder with the comfortable, calm atmosphere within the school.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions
- The most important aspect of choosing an Elder is to ensure that they are respected within the community.

Contact:

Community School Coordinator

Pleasant Hill Community School
215 Avenue S South
SASKATOON SK
S7M 2Z9

PH: 683-7390
FAX: 683-7398

Partnerships:

- Saskatoon Tribal Council

Booklet
Pleasant Hill Community School is developing a booklet on their Elder program. The booklet contains useful information for other schools planning an Elder or cultural coordinator program. Contact the Community School Coordinator, for more information.

Saskatoon School Division

Outreach Worker
King George/Mayfair/Westmount Community Schools

Contact:

Principal

or

Community School Coordinator

King George Community School
721 Avenue K South
SASKATOON SK
S7M 2E7

PH: 683-7315
FAX: 683-7317

Partnerships:

- Community Association

Description

- King George, Westmount and Mayfair Community Schools shared an outreach worker.
- The outreach worker worked with the most needy families.
- The local community association employed the outreach worker.

Major Role

The outreach worker's major roles included:

- promoting communication and positive relationships between school and community;
- conducting home visits;
- assisting in screening and selecting culturally relevant materials for the school;
- planning events– e.g., traditional feasts, pow-wows; and,
- working with families to encourage students to stay in school or return to school.

Program Details/Comments

- The outreach worker was selected through an advertisement.
- The outreach worker's responsibilities often depend upon the expertise and interests of the individual hired.
- The principals and Community School coordinators, who work closely together, supervised the outreach worker.

Suggestions/Advice to Other School Divisions

- Be aware of community politics and sensitivities.
- The most valuable aspect of outreach is the contacts with the families.
- To make the program work it is very important that all involved work out their differences in beliefs and perspectives.

Appendix D

Resources

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